

## Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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R 200600Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9884

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T JIDDA 0407

EXDIS

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SA, LE

SUBJ: U.S. ARMS FOR LEBANON

1. IN THE COURSE OF LISTING RECENT AMERICAN POSITIONS, STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS FAVORABLE TO THE ARABS, THE AMBASSADOR TOLD PRINCE SULTAN OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO SUPPLY SOME ARMS TO LEBANON. SULTAN WAS SREMENDOUSLY PLEASED. HE SAID THAT LEBANON HAD ASKED SEVERAL ARAB COUNTRIES FOR HELP. QADHAFFI HAD MADE GRANDIOSE OFFERS BUT HAD DELIVERED NOTHING. IN ANY CASE, SULTAN SAID, "WE WOULD NOT WANT QADHAFFI FIRMLY ENTRENCHED IN LEBANON."

2. SULTAN SAID THE LEBANESE HAD ALSO APPROACHED SAUDI ARABIA WITH THE REQUEST FOR \$400 MILLION TO BUY ARMS. THE SAUDIS FOUND THIS RATHER EXAGGERATED; THEY SUGGESTED REDUCTIONS AND SENT BACK THE REQUEST FOR REVISION. LEBANESE DEFENSE MINISTER SKAF VISITED SAUDI ARABIA RECENTLY AND SAID HIS GOVERNMENT AGREED TO THE SAUDI REDUCTIONS AND ASKED IF SAUDI ARABIA WOULD NOW GIVE THEM MONEY FOR THE SMALLER PACKAGE.

3. SULTAN SAID THEY WERE WELL DISPOSED TO HELPING LEBANON; A SAUDI MILITARY MISSION WOULD BE SENT TO LEBANON ALMOST  
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IMMEDIATELY, WOULD DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THE LEBANESE

AUTHORITIES AND TRY TO REACH A CONSENSUS ON THE URGENT LEBANESE REQUIREMENTS. SAUDI ARABIA WOULD THEN PAY FOR THE ARMS DIRECTLY; IT WOULD NOT GIVE MONEY TO THE LEBANESE FOR THE ARMS AS "MOST OF THE MONEY WOULD GO INTO THE POCKETS OF LEBANESE BUSINESSMEN."

4. SULTAN SAID THAT THEY WOULD HOPE THE ARMS WOULD COME FROM THE UNITED STATES AND ASKED URGENTLY THAT SAUDI ARABIA AND UNITED STATES COORDINATE THEIR ACTION. HE WOULD PROPOSE THAT SAUDI ARABIA PAY DIRECTLY TO THE UNITED STATES FOR THE ARMS WHICH WERE DELIVERED TO LEBANON. THIS WOULD STRENGTHEN LEBANON, WOULD IMPROVE THE POSITION OF BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND SAUDI ARABIA AND WOULD CLIP THE WINGS OF THE RADICALS - PARTICULARLY QADHAFFI. IF THE UNITED STATES COULD NOT SUPPLY THE ARMS LEBANON NEEDED URGENTLY, THEN IT WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TURN TO OTHER SUPPLIERS "WHEREVER THEY MIGHT BE."

5. ACTION REQUESTED:

A. HAS THIS MATTER BEEN DISCUSSED WITH EMBASSY BEIRUT?

B. CAN I REPLY TO SULTAN THAT WE ACCEPT IN PRINCIPLE HIS SUGGESTION FOR A JOINT SURVEY AND U.S. SALES TO LEBANON?

C. CAN A SMALL U.S. MILITARY MISSION COME SOON TO LEBANON AND SAUDI ARABIA TO DISCUSS THE MATTERS OF PAYMENTS, OF NEEDS AND OF DELIVERY TIMES?

6. WE NEED ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS NO LATER THAN OPENING OF BUSINESS HERE (0500 GMT) JAN 22.  
AKINS

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NNN

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